



Neighborhood Networks Conference Call

Creating a Map to Community Resources

**July 13, 2010
3 p.m. (EDT)**



Presenters



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Building On Local Strengths

Identifying Community Assets



Today's Conference Call



- Deficit-Based vs. Asset-Based Approaches to Community Planning.
- Uncovering Local Assets: The Three Areas of Focus.
- The Power of Synergy.
- Questions & Clarifications.



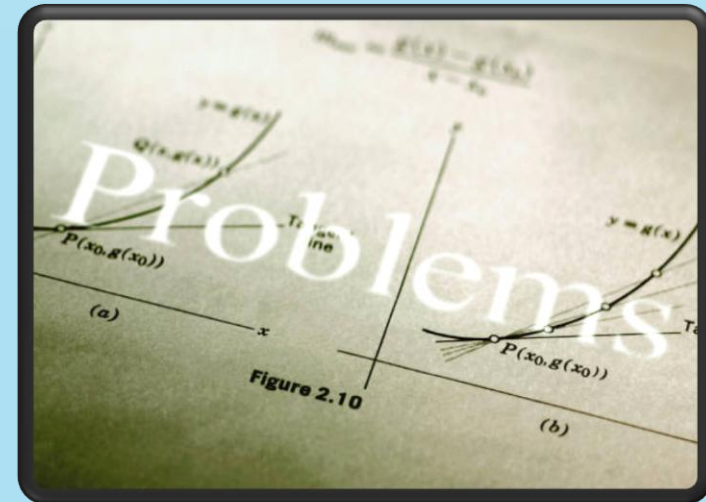
Overall Purpose

- Develop an understanding and appreciation of the asset-based model as an important approach for spurring community change.
- Set forth strategies to uncover and link assets existing among individuals and organizations (voluntary and formal) in the community-at-large.



The Traditional Approach to Community-Based Planning

- The Deficit-Mode to Community Development: The Needs Assessment Process.



Starting with Needs: Putting the Cart before the Horse?

- When we start with an assessment of local needs, we convey a message that communities and the people who reside within them are fundamentally deficient.
- Leaves impression that local people are unable to take charge of their lives and their community's future.
- Deficiency models do not focus on the development of plans to mobilize the entire community.



Another Approach: A Focus on Capacity Development

- Community development, to be successful over the long-term, must focus within the community and on local people and groups.
- A first step is to map the capacities, skills, and assets of local citizens and organizations.
- By so doing, we discover a rich reservoir of resources available to address issues of local concern.
- The key is to tap these local strengths whenever we seek to address local issues.



The Dilemma . . .



People and communities have **deficiencies** and **needs**.

People and communities have **skills** and **talents**.





See My Disabilities ?

Which Approach is Best?

In reality, they are two sides
of the same coin.

Important to
acknowledge our
community has
problems.



Important to take stock of
resources that can help
tackle local challenges.

Using both techniques helps ensure we
have a more accurate and complete
picture of the community.

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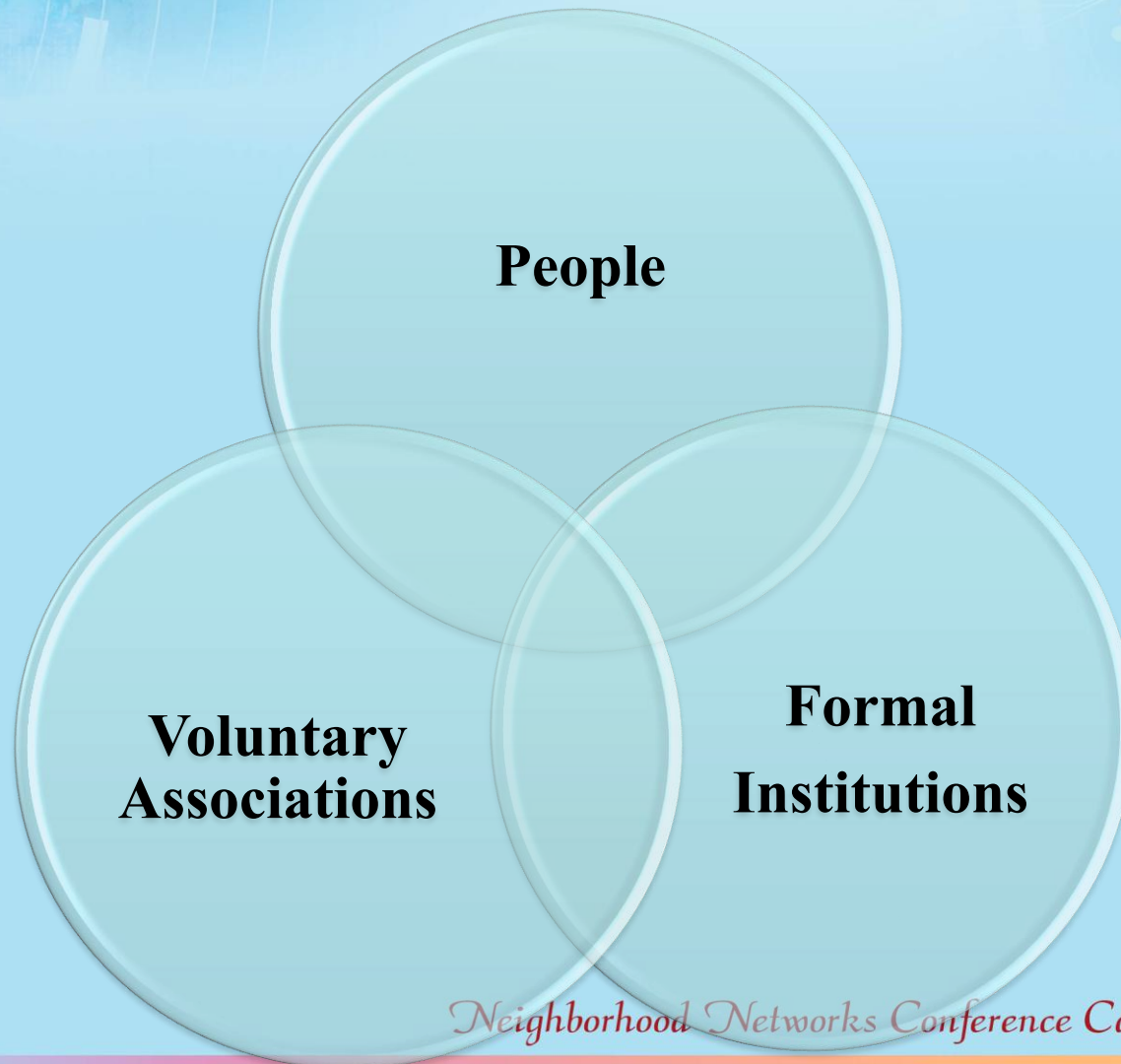
Key Principles of Asset Mapping

- Assets are present in our community (and neighborhoods).
- The health of our community depends on our ability to effectively mobilize the resources and talents that exist internally within our locality.
- Linking these assets to one another is vital to the pursuit of local goals and strategies.

**Got to
Believe
in
These!**



Three Key Arenas for Uncovering Community Assets



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Where to Find Local Assets

- **People:** Discover the skills and talents of local residents.
- **Associations:** Document current and potential activities of citizen-based voluntary associations.
- **Institutions:** Determine relevant activities and resources of formal institutions in the area.



Resources to Uncover Individual Assets

- **TOOLS:**



- Capacity Inventory of Individuals (Part I).
- Community Participation and Leadership Inventory (Part II).



Focusing on Voluntary Associations and Formal Institutions

- **Identify** voluntary organizations and local institutions that exist in the community.
- **Record** the current activities that could support community improvement efforts.
- **Determine** what activities they might undertake in the future to support and strengthen the community.

**Formal
Institutions**

**Voluntary
Associations**



Local Formal Institutions: What Are They?

- They exist in most communities, though of varying strengths and capacities.
- They are formal structures in place that help meet the ongoing needs of residents.
- The vitality of a community is dependent on the key functions performed by local institutions.
- What are these institutions?



Community Institutions

Family



Economic



Education



Health

Religious



Government

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Capturing the Assets of Associations and Institutions

- **The TOOL:**

- Capacity Inventory of Voluntary Organizations and Local Institutions (Part III).
- Let's review the document.



What the Tool Can Capture

- The organization's mission.
- Number of members/employees.
- Current community-oriented activities or programs.
- Current resources (buildings, equipment, purchases made, areas of expertise, grants/donations available, access to external resources).
- Groups with whom the organization works on a close basis.
- Activities/programs the organization hopes to launch over the next 3-5 years in the community.



The Strength of Synergy

- Important to link people, voluntary groups and formal institutions together to address local issues and opportunities.
- Doing so provides greater diversity of perspectives, and leads to more creative solutions.
- End result is a more comprehensive response to local issues/opportunities.



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Asset Mapping Defined

- **Asset Mapping** is:
 - An inventory of the businesses, organizations, and institutions that help create a community.
 - A process that identifies local resources that have the potential to provide programs, services, funds, or in-kind gifts to a center.
 - Examples: Area nonprofits, area health services.



Environmental Scanning Defined

- ***Environmental Scanning*** is:
 - Monitoring the internal and external environment for opportunities and threats that influence future plans of an organization.
 - The collection of internal and external data that can prepare a center for opportunities and threats.
 - Examples: Demographic information, employment laws.



Starting an Asset Map

- Determine the needs of your residents:
 - Use focus groups, needs assessment surveys, interviews, and door to door visits.
 - Tailor all needs assessment tools to population of center. (language, literacy levels, etc.)
 - Seek out needs in the following six asset areas:
 - Employment (workforce development).
 - Health.
 - Education.
 - Youth services.
 - Senior services.
 - Financial services.



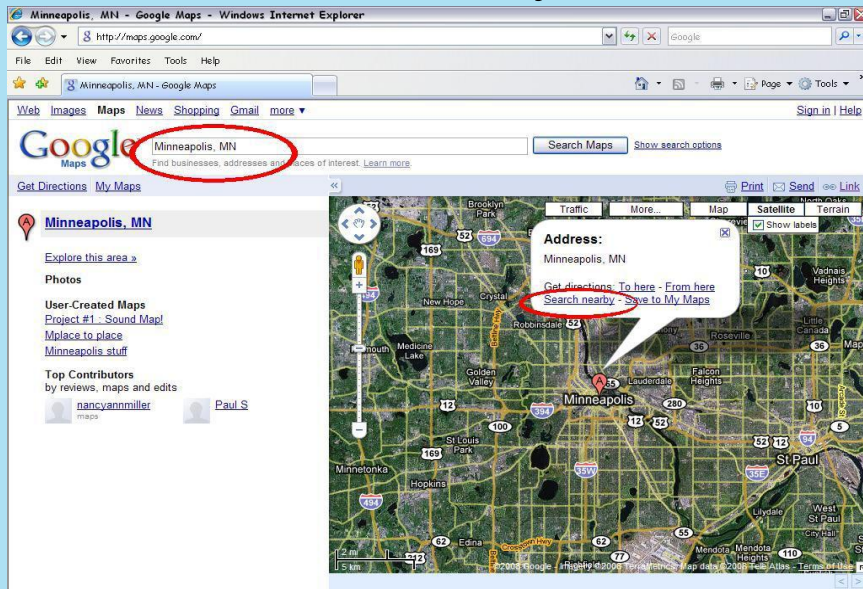
Search the Community

- Use resident input to guide search.
 - Focus on areas of need.
- Strategies for “Searching the Community”:
 - Use common search engines (Google, Bing, etc.).
 - Conduct map searches or standard text searches.
 - Network with partners.



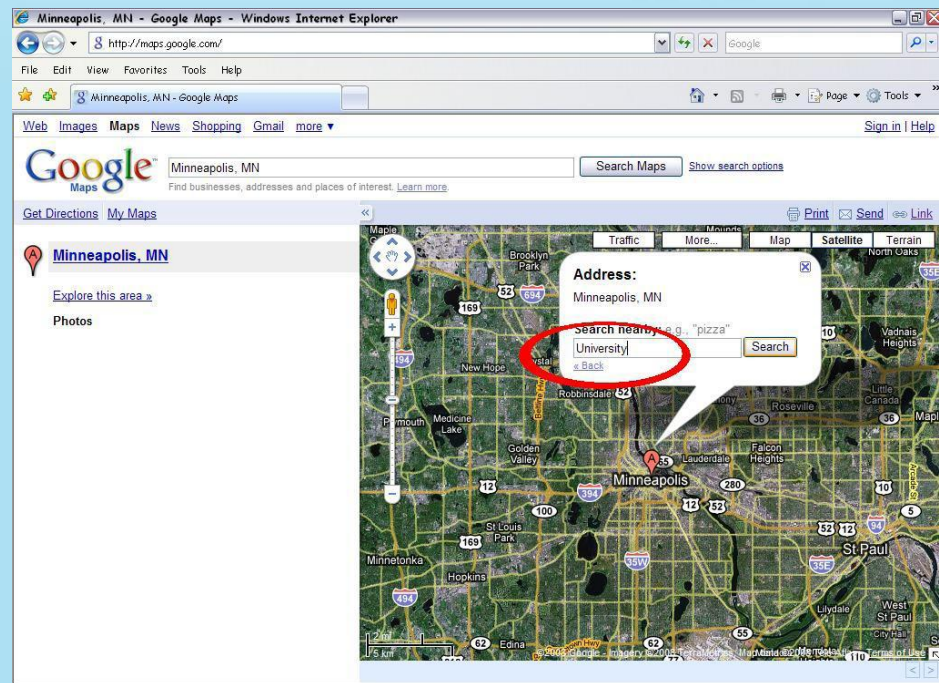
Conducting a Map Search

- Start asset mapping by using a Web-based search engine, such as www.google.com.
- On the top of the page, click Maps to open the mapping application in the Web browser.
- Type in the center's city and state location in the search field.
- Click the “Search Maps” button to the right of the search box.
- Once the location is pinpointed on the map, click the link labeled “Search nearby.”



Conducting a Map Search (continued):

- In the “Search nearby” field, enter a key word related to a potential resource. Key words may include:
 - University or college.
 - Career center.
 - Organization.
 - Library.
 - Foundation.
 - Workforce.
 - Employment.
 - Education.



Identifying Assets

- After finding potential assets:
 - Confirm whether the resource's vision, mission, goals, and objectives match the center's.
 - Examine resource Web sites for this information (which can often be found on the "About Us" page).



Ask the Right Questions

- When choosing assets, ask:
 - Do residents and community members frequently use resources from this business/organization?
 - Are there partnership activities with the organization?
 - Is there consistent communication with the organization?
 - Has the center received funding from the organization?
 - Who are the organization's key members and is there a relationship with any of them?
 - Do the organization's mission, goals, and objectives mirror those of the center?



Verifying Assets

- Make sure to verify resource information.
 - Call or email the resource to determine the correct contact information.
- Document the information provided so residents can use the resource.
 - Contact information should include:
 - Business/organization name and a description of services provided.
 - Address.
 - Phone number(s) and fax number(s).
 - Web site URL.
 - Contact name and title.
 - Direct contact's phone number and e-mail address.



Add the Assets to the Map

- Finally, compile a list of all assets in a Word document.
- Refer to the Web site Creation Tool instructions for detailed information on creating your customized one-stop-shop Web page and uploading asset mapping results.
 - The instructions are located on the Neighborhood Networks Web site at:
 - <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/mfh/nnw/resourcesforcenters/websitecreationtool.pdf>



Environmental Scanning Methods for Centers

- External sources to monitor:
 - Demographic.
 - Political/governmental.
 - Economic.
- Internal sources to monitor:
 - Educational.
 - Demographic.
 - Economic/Workforce skills.



External Monitoring

- Check external environment regularly.
 - Check resources monthly or quarterly for changes.
- Measure which environmental factors offer opportunities or threats to the center (i.e. changes in employment landscape).



Demographic Environment

- What to search for:
 - Breakdown of ethnicity and race in the area.
 - Poverty levels in area.
 - Educational levels in area.
 - Median income in the area.
- Where to search for it:
 - U.S. Census Bureau: www.census.gov.



Political/Governmental Environment

- What to search for:
 - Employment laws.
 - Policy priorities of local leaders.
 - New policies that may affect centers.
- Where to find it:
 - Local government Web sites.
 - City, County, and State Web sites.
 - Search news and press releases for new policies.
 - Local newspapers/news Web sites.



Economic Environment

- What to search for:
 - Changes in local employment landscape.
 - Changes in top employers by industry.
 - Industry diversification.
 - Unemployment rates.
- Where to find it:
 - Local One Stop employment center:
www.servicelocator.org.
 - Bureau of Labor and Statistics: www.bls.gov.
 - US Census Bureau: www.census.gov.



Internal Environmental Monitoring

- Continually monitor the demographic, economic, and educational environment of the center.
- Conduct surveys, focus groups, and interviews to measure unknowns.
- Examples of what to look for:
 - Employment rates at center/property.
 - Full/Part-time.
 - Number of residents enrolled in educational institutions.
 - Demographic changes at the center/property.



What to Do with the Data

- Organize data into Word documents/Excel spreadsheets.
- Group data into Strengths and Weaknesses for the Internal Environment. Examples:
 - A strength is high employment.
 - A weakness is low educational attainment.
- Group data into Opportunities and Threats for the External Environment. Examples:
 - An opportunity is a new city program targeting populations with low employment skills.
 - A threat is industry changes resulting in the loss of many low-skilled jobs.



Important Resources

Neighborhood Networks Asset Mapping Guide:

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/mfh/nnw/resources/forcenters/assetmapping.pdf>

U.S. Census:

<http://www.census.gov>

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics:

<http://www.bls.gov>



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Community Assessment

There are people in your community who have individual resources that can benefit your community center.



Community

Individuals, institutions, government, organizations,
land, cultural resources

Churches

Residents

**Schools/Colleges/
Universities**

**State/City/Local
Government
Agencies**

**Other
Non-Profits**

Businesses

Museums

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Examples

- Churches in our community have provided donations for our seniors and pre-school, and have sponsored center activities such as moonwalks.
- Houston Community College assisted our residents with enrolling in classes and trade school programs. They also created a summer program for our middle school children geared toward opening their eyes to different career paths.



- Government Agencies:
 - VISTAs.
 - City Lunch Program.
- Non-Profit Partnerships:
 - Center for Student Missions (CSM): college volunteers.



Asset Mapping

- Asset mapping helps Neighborhood Networks centers create productive, fun and resourceful centers for the communities they serve!



Questions



To ask questions, please:

- Press *1 on your phone when the operator opens the line for questions.

Please remember to:

- Mute your phone if not speaking by pressing *6. If asking a question by phone, please unmute your line by pressing *6 and mute it again by pressing *6 after your question has been answered.



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